

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 03251 291742Z

44

ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05

TRSE-00 SAJ-01 ERDA-05 OES-03 OMB-01 NRC-05 /079 W

----- 065154

R 271720Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6012

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CNO WASHDC

USCINCEUR

COMSIXTHFLT

COMFAIRMED NAPLES IT

COMNAVSEASCOM WASHDC

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMUBGRU EIGHT NAPLES IT

CINCLANFLT

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3251

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MNUC, IT

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP (NPW) VISITS TO MEDITERRANEAN

REF: (A) STATE 043042 (DTG 231923Z FEB 76); (B) ROME 1113

(DTG 221659Z JAN 76); (C) ROME 1431 (DTG 281530Z JAN 76);

(D) SECSTATE 024697 (DTG 310316Z JAN 76); (E) USMISSION NATO

521 (DTG 311045Z JAN 76); (F) STATE AIRGRAM A-292 OF 16 JAN

75; (G) ROME 1737 (DTG 021810Z JAN 76); (H) ROME 1751 (DTG

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PAGE 02 ROME 03251 291742Z

031140Z FEB 76)

1. USING GUIDANCE CONTAINED REF A, CHARGE DISCUSSED AT LENGTH U.S. POSITION NPW VISITS WITH DIRECTOR GENERAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS MFA FEBRUARY 26. DIRECTOR INDICATED HE WOULD CONVEY OUR RATIONALE TO HIS MINISTER BUT ASSUMED IT WOULD BE FURTHER ESCALATED TO PRIME MINISTER BEFORE AN AUTHORATIVE REACTION WOULD BE FORTHCOMING.

2. DIRECTOR WELCOMED INFORMATION THAT NIMITZ GROUP HAD MADE PORT VISITS TO OTHER NATO COUNTRIES DURING NORTH SEA DEPLOYMENT WITHOUT SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS BEYOND STANDARD STATEMENT. HE ASKED WHETHER NIMITZ AND COMPANY WOULD BE CALLING AT OTHER THAN ITALIAN MEDITERRANEAN PORTS WHILE OPERATING AS PART OF SIXTH FLEET. IF THAT WERE THE CASE, HE FELT THE GOI'S POSITION WOULD BE FURTHER BOLSTERED. CHARGE INDICATED HE HAD NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION BUT ASSUMED THE NPWS WOULD LIKELY BE CALLING AT MOST PORTS WHERE SIXTH FLEET VESSELS ROUTINELY VISIT. IF THERE WERE SOME OBSTACLES TO SUCH VISITS AT SOME MEDITERRANEAN PORTS, THEY WERE RELATED TO PORT CALLS IN GENERAL, NOT TO THE MODE OF PROPULSION OF SPECIFIC VESSELS.

3. ALTHOUGH WE RECEIVED A SYMPATHETIC HEARING IT IS DIFFICULT TO JUDGE WHETHER THE POLITICAL LEVEL OF THE GOI WILL CONCUR AFTER THE EXPECTED AGONIZING OR WILL RETURN TO US WITH A PLEA TO FIND SOME WAY TO PASS THIS PARTICULAR CUP. THE SPECTRA OF A MASSIVE POPULAR AND MEDIA REACTION AGAINST NPW VISITS HAS LARGELY BEEN CONJURED UP OUT OF THE OBVIOUS INSECURITY OF THE GOI LEADERSHIP. WE HAVE POINTED TO YEARS OF GENERAL PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE TO NUCLEAR SUBMARINE VISITS TO ITALIAN PORTS. CLEARLY THE GOI IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES PREFERS NOT TO RISK A PRESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST NPWS.

4. THE DIRECTOR SAID HE WOULD APPROACH FONMIN RUMOR AS SOON AS HE COULD GET A HEARING AND LET US HAVE THE GOI REACTION. THE DIRECTOR UNDERSTANDS AND SUPPORTS OUR POSITION. BEAUDRY

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